

§ 708.6 Filing a complaint.

(a) An employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of this part, and who has not, with respect to the same facts, pursued a remedy available under State or other applicable law, may file a complaint with DOE through the Head of Field Element at the field organization. For purposes of this part, a complaint shall be deemed to have been pursued under State or other applicable law if the employee has, pursuant to proceedings established or mandated by State or other applicable law, at any time prior to, or concurrently with, the filing of a complaint with DOE, or at any time during the processing of a complaint filed with DOE, filed or submitted any complaint, action, grievance, or other pleading with respect to that same matter. The pursuit of a remedy under a negotiated collective bargaining agreement will be considered the pursuit of a remedy through internal company grievance procedures and not the pursuit of a remedy under State or other applicable law. The limitations period specified in § 708.6(d) shall be suspended upon the filing of a complaint pursuant to State or other applicable law, and the mere filing of a complaint pursuant to State or other applicable law shall not bar the employee from re-instituting or filing a complaint with DOE if the matter cannot be resolved under State or other applicable law due to a lack of jurisdiction.

(b) The Head of Field Element may designate an individual to serve as point of contact for processing the complaint and for undertaking the responsibilities under § 708.7.

(c) A complaint filed under paragraph (a) of this section need not be in any specific form provided it is signed by the complainant and contains the following: A statement setting forth specifically the nature of the alleged discriminatory act, and the disclosure, participation or refusal giving rise to such act; a statement that the complainant has not, as described in paragraph (a) of this section, pursued a remedy available under State or other applicable law; and an affirmation that all facts contained in the complaint are true and correct to the best of the

complainant's knowledge and belief. Additionally, the complaint must contain a statement affirming that:

(1) All attempts at resolution through an internal company grievance procedure have been exhausted;

(2) The company grievance procedure is ineffectual or exposes the complainant to employer reprisals; or

(3) The company has no such procedure.

The complaint must state the factual basis for such affirmation; and, if applicable, the date on which internal company grievance procedures were terminated and the reasons for termination.

(d) A complaint filed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section must be filed within 60 days after the alleged discriminatory act occurred or within 60 days after the complainant knew, or reasonably should have known, of the alleged discriminatory act, whichever is later. In cases where the employee has attempted resolution through internal company grievance procedures as set forth in paragraph (c) of this section, the 60-day period for filing a complaint shall be tolled during such resolution period and shall not again begin to run until the day following termination of such dispute-resolution efforts.

(e) Within 15 days of receipt of a complaint filed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, the Head of Field Element or designee shall notify:

(1) The contractor, person, or persons named in the complaint, and

(2) The Director, of the filing of the complaint.

A copy of the complaint shall be forwarded to the Director.

(f) Any person or party responsible for the conduct of any investigation or proceeding pursuant to this part shall ensure that appropriate safeguards are implemented to accommodate circumstances involving Restricted Data, national security information, or any other classified or sensitive information protected by Executive Order, statute, or regulation.

§ 708.7 Attempt at informal resolution.

(a) The Head of Field Element or designee shall have 30 days from the date of receipt of a complaint in which to attempt an informal resolution of the